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Around the World at Play

A Picture Book
of a German
Play Fair

Mathilde Ritter
Painted
The Pictures





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Albert Whitman & Company

Chicago

Printed in Germany

1932

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Joan and Peter were in Germany. Father was traveling there on business. Mother, Joan, and Peter were waiting for him at their hotel in one of Germany's large cities.

Three weeks before a playroom full of dolls, tin soldiers, toys, and picture books had been left in America because there had simply been "no place to put them" in the trunks.

"What shall I do now?" Peter would ask every few minutes. "I wish I had my tin soldiers or my drum, or —"

"Mother, what can I do next?" Joan would also ask every few minutes. "I wish I had my lady-doll and her trunk, and —"

"I have seen a Play Fair advertised," said mother. "A prize is offered for the most interesting game suggestion which little folk have themselves worked out. Let's go to see it!"

Mother, Joan, and Peter walked to a little park. There they saw seven groups of children at play. Not only were they playing with their own toys, but they were using the old familiar household things — the ironing board, the clothes basket, the rake — in most exciting ways!

"Look, mother, they are playing store," said Joan as they walked to the first group.

"Just look at that lawn seat turned to make a counter with the umbrella fastened to it," said Peter. "That's a good idea when we play store at home."



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In the second group they saw a little boy lying on his back twirling a large black umbrella that was open above him. From each rib hung a toy swing. In one swing sat a teddy bear; in another swing sat a doll in a red hat.

In the corner of the yard a doll in a yellow dress was starting down a sand slide.

"Look, mother, it is a dining room chair turned with its back on the floor and covered with a rug! A regular sand slide for dolls, isn't it," said Joan happily.

"I like the umbrella merry-go-round," said Peter.

"It is certainly an amusement park for toys," said mother.





"Look over there," said mother as they walked on.

"They are playing orchestra," said Joan and Peter together.

A little boy was conducting a five-piece orchestra.

"Name the pieces, mother," both children demanded.

"The little boy conducting has a baton in his hand. To his left the little boy with the rake is playing the xylophone, I should think."

"The boy in the blue jacket is playing the drum, isn't he, mother?" interrupted Peter.

"Yes, and the cymbals lay on the floor beside him," nodded mother. "I expect the little boy with the red watering pot fancies he is playing the cornet. The little girl with the big red bow is the orchestra soloist. The one in yellow is playing the harmonica. See, every eye is on the leader."

As mother, Joan, and Peter walked quietly toward the next group Peter said thoughtfully, "I must remember to use our green watering pot at home for my cornet the next time we have a band!"





Joan was especially interested in two little girls who were playing house in the next group. Two large picture books formed the canopy of the doll's bed.

A sick baby doll was taking a spoonful of medicine after its hot bath.

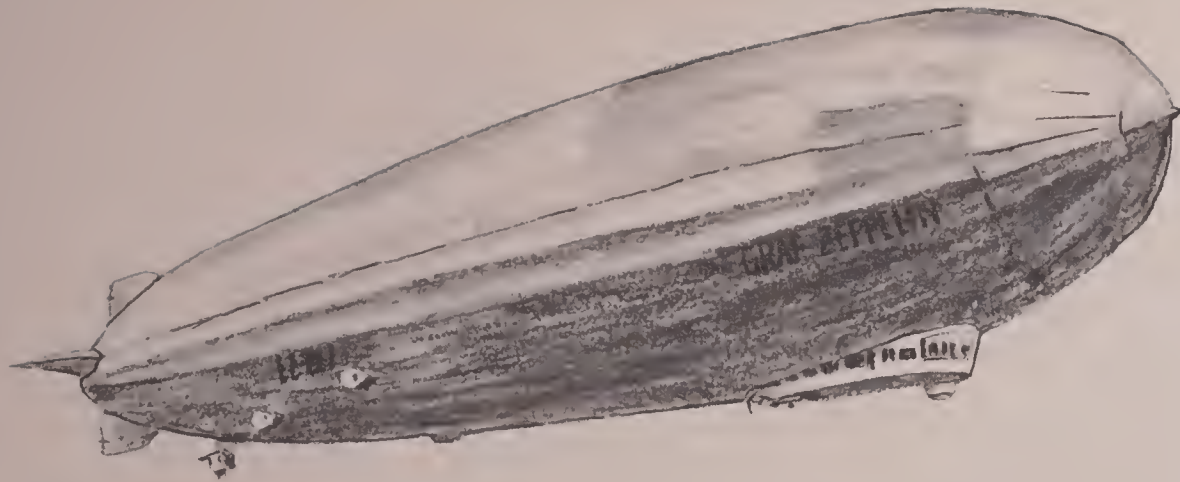
"Perhaps the poor baby doll has croup, just the way Mary Elizabeth has so dreadfully each spring," said Joan.

"Perhaps she has," agreed mother.

"Let's hurry," said Peter. "What's happening over there?"







In the fifth group stood a kitchen table. On the top of the kitchen table stood two straight wooden chairs, one at each end. An ironing board lay across the top of the two chairs. Over the ironing board hung a blanket, with the ends tied close to the table's edge. Heavy rope was used to tie

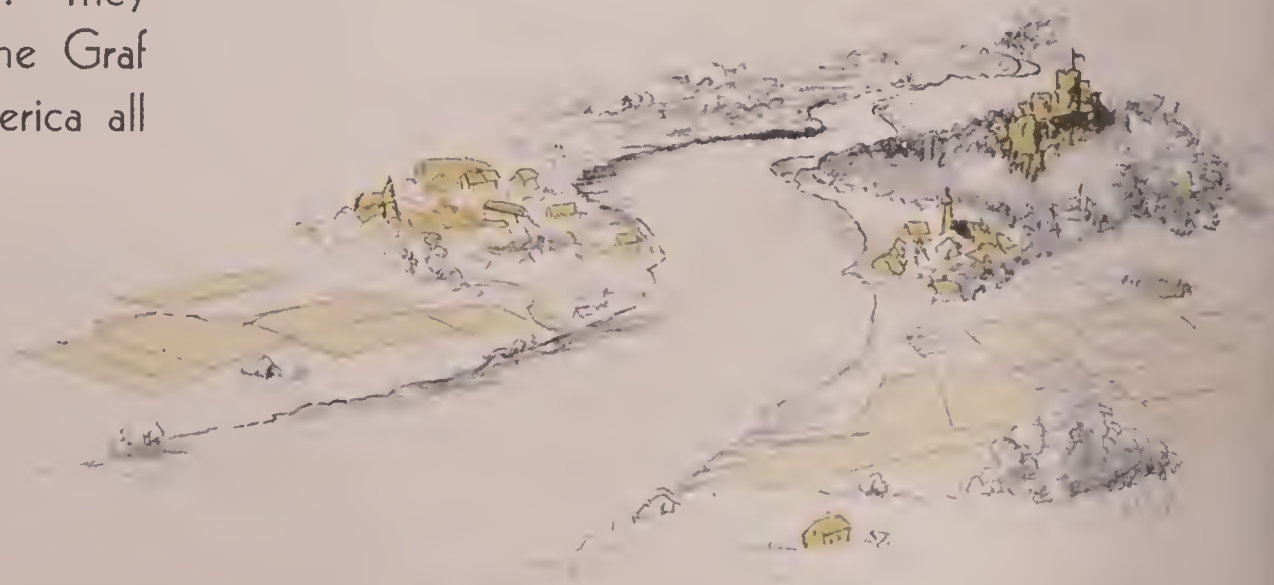
the chairs to the big table so that they would not fall off.

A little girl peeped out from behind the blanket to wave goodbye to a little girl below her.

A boy with a blue cap was looking out of one end of a baseball bat.

"Whatever can that be?" asked mother.

"Don't you know?" said Peter. "They are in an airship — probably the Graf Zeppelin. I hope it reaches America all right! They should get the prize."





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Joan and Peter next discovered a toy hospital, with four children at play.

A teddy bear was having its leg bandaged. A doll without an arm lay on a white pillow. The toy wooden rabbit sat with its ear neatly bandaged. A trained nurse was taking a doll-patient's temperature with the big kitchen thermometer.

"Look, Peter," said Joan. "Her nurse's cap is her father's stiff wing collar with the necktie hanging down behind!"

"The little girl ringing the bell must be the ambulance rushing a very sick doll to the hospital," added mother.

"Look at all the Red Cross emblems, just as we have at home," said Peter. "I always like to play hospital. I think I'll be a doctor when I grow up."





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"Look, there's a railway train," said Peter excitedly.

Mother and Joan looked.

Sure enough, a clothes basket was plainly the engine, with the chimney a big, bright paper cornucopia. The engine's bell hung on the curved handle of a cane.

Following the engine were several passenger coaches. A table turned upside down with a chopping board laid across the rounds as a seat was the first coach.

Five more coaches and an observation car completed the train.

As mother, Joan, and Peter watched, a small boy raised a railroad signal. The engineer blew his whistle.

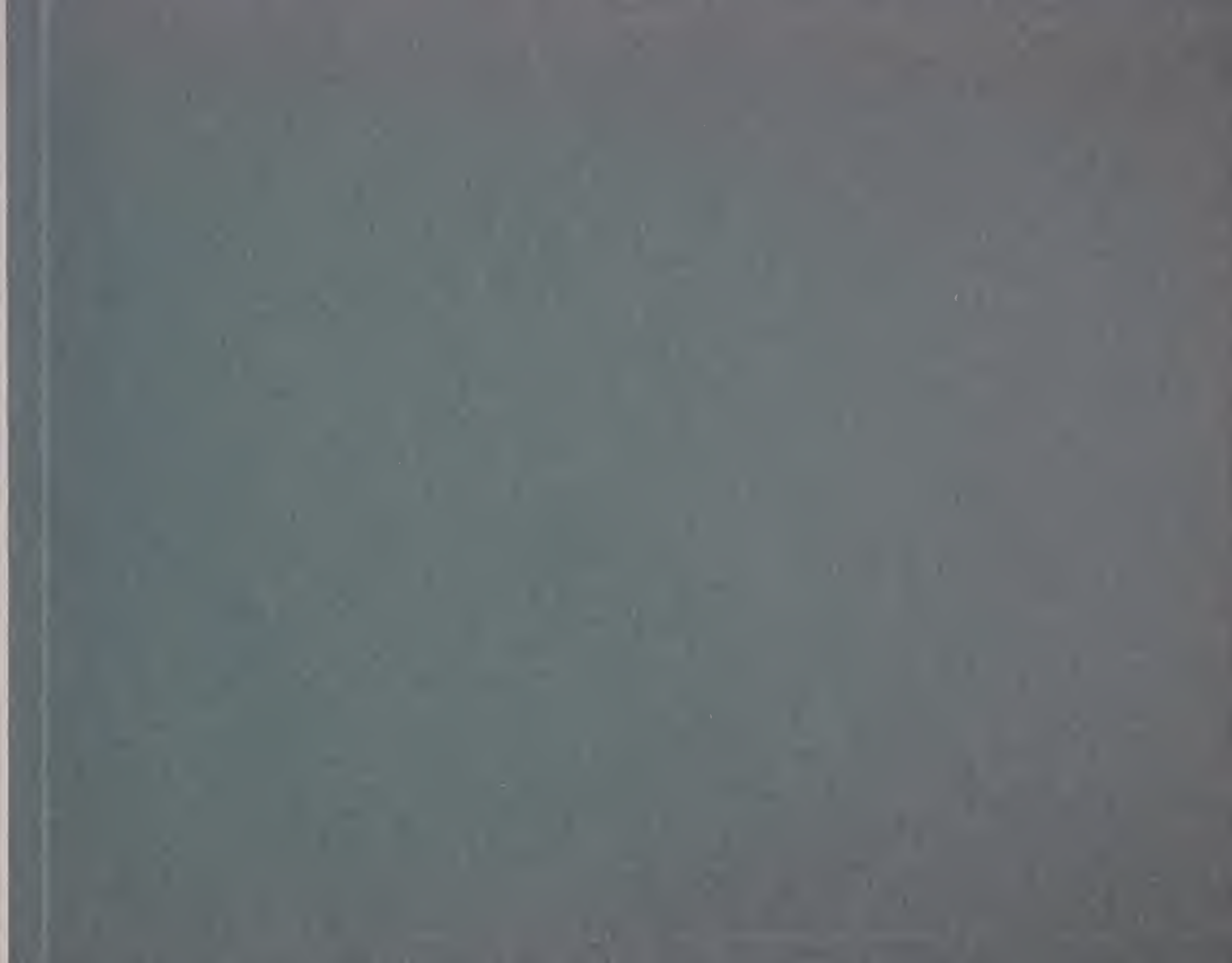
"All aboard," called Peter. "All aboard for a trip around the world at play!"

And so the Play Fair ended for Peter and Joan. They never could decide which group had planned the nicest game, nor could they wait to see who got the prize. But many, many suggestions from the Play Fair in Germany added fun to their games in America.









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